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ALFRED AGLER: My name is Alfred Agler. I am the director of transportation for the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio. I would first like to applaud the DOE for the series of meetings that they've been having across the country on this very vexing issue as you've heard in the presentations today. We have provided some written comments to the panel today. I'm not going to belabor the meeting today by reading all of those. I would like to capsulize a few of the thoughts that are contained in there.

Representative Kucinich got it right this morning when he was saying that this is an issue that we need to approach and bring to bear the best minds in the country to address this problem.

1 The presentations from the DOE this morning demonstrated that there has been a tremendous amount of work and effort that has gone into this, but there still remain numerous technical and legal and political questions that call into question whether or not these shipments will ever take place.

2 That being said the Commission's position can be very simply stated in this matter. And that is; that if these shipments are to be made, it's our desire that these shipments be made as safely as possible for the citizens of Ohio. Now, the role of the Commission and our primary responsibilities in this regard are essentially three fold. The Commission, first and foremost, is involved in the safety business in terms of inspecting and licensing the companies that are going to be involved, be they trucking companies or be they railroad companies. And we have an active program of inspection activity to ensure compliance with the applicable federal motor carrier safety regs and railroad safety regs and hazardous materials regulations.

3 The second item that we are going to be focusing on is the routes that are going to be used to make sure that those are the safest possible routes that minimize the potential risk to the public. That is, as a part of our role as the designated routing agency for the State of Ohio that would be involved with the local communities and to ensure that all voices are heard and all concerns are considered in this area in the fine tuning of how these shipments will be made.

We've taken some first initial step in that regard to start gathering the data and gathering the processes to logically follow in that area. This fall the Commission granted a -- issued a grant, I should say, to the Ohio State University to begin this process of examining potential routes and examining issues that need to be considered in making a proper evaluation. And at the appropriate time that can be used to involve the local communities and the local emergency planners.

4 The final thing that the Commission is involved in is providing the funds and technical assistance to these local communities both in the routing process and also in supplying the funds to train their emergency responders to address any potential problems that arise in the shipment of these things.

Ohio is very fortunate to have a comprehensive hazardous material safety program that addresses many facets all the way through inspection to education to training and enforcement activities. Cleveland is fortunate in that they have a center here at the Cleveland State University that has had substantial funding by the Commission to address hazardous material issues and

provide training to emergency responders and we intend to continue to actively support that effort.

5 I want to just make, quickly, two last points in terms of the Commission's role in this. It is our intention that when the process begins in looking at the fine tuning of these routes and specifically where this will go, if it goes. It is our intention to involve the local communities in that process and we will only designate local communities only in designated routes where there has been a full participation of the local community. On the other hand, it is also our intention not to designate a route where the purpose is merely to export the risk, be it to a neighboring community or a neighboring state and we don't think that that would be a reasonable public policy pursuit and we are going to do our very best to engage all parties and find the best solution.

6 The final thing that I would want to stress is that the training aspects of getting communities up and ready for this does not happen over night and it is very critical that the DOE live up to it's obligations to provide training money to the communities and that it be -- and that we receive notifications far enough in advance so that we have an effective time period to undertake that training. The Commission has it's own funding for emergency training that we secure as a result of penalties assessed upon transporters for safety violations and it is our intention to make sure those monies are used and that no community has to forego necessary training in the event that these movements are made. So with that, I thank you for the opportunity to present these views to you today.